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LABOR AND CONDENSED LABOR.

WHEN any one, at the present day, takes the side of labor in its struggle for existence, he is called a "socialist." To the superficial observer, to the untrained thinker, this word conveys the impression of arson, riot, and the unbalancing of all old ideas of quiet and the safety of property. It seems incredible, in this age of reason, that the friends and advocates of labor should be classed with nihilists, anarchists, and dynamiters, and that murder and destruction of property should be considered a part of their mission. That such an opinion is general cannot be denied ; but, to reach the conclusion that the world is not yet coming to an end by means of socialism, I think it is only necessary to give a little study to the relations of capital and labor.

In the first place, what is capital ? Merely the accumulated tokens of past labor, saved by thrifty and prudent men, for the use of the present army of those who toil for their bread. Why should labor be jealous of capital ? One might as well expect the earth to be jealous of the clouds, which hold condensed moisture, returning it in rain, to enable the parched land to produce food for its famishing thousands. The capitalist is merely a laborer, who, by industry and judicious savings, has condensed some of labor's past wages, to distribute them to his fellows, that they may again produce a living, and that some small portion may be re-condensed, to reproduce itself, and enable suffering humanity to live. That labor should quarrel with capital seems as strange, to an intelligent being, as that young birds should be jealous of their mother's experience, which fits her to provide for their helpless daily wants.

The rights of labor at this time engage the attention of all intelligent persons ; and the future of capital and labor makes old women and miserly capitalists shudder, for fear of parting with their dollars in acknowledging the rights of their co-laborers.

They forget that they are merely the custodians of the condensed labor of poor workers, and cannot justly hold it except for the benefit of other workers who follow them. They cannot bury it; for it would produce no interest. They must necessarily lend it to the laborers of the time, to enable such laborers to produce and live.

The rights of labor have been written about in many ways, none of which strike me as meeting the question.

For many years I have employed large numbers of persons, and have carefully considered their conditions and prospects. I have tried to devise some way of benefiting those hard-worked persons who thoroughly represent the side of labor. I have a plan, which I believe is original, for securing in their behalf perfect justice and political equality, so that they cannot say justice is all on the side of capital. This plan I will briefly describe.

In each Congressional district I would have the trades send delegates to a meeting, for the purpose of choosing representatives to a Labor Congress for one year. These chosen representatives should nominate two senators to represent their State in a National Labor Senate—one senator elected for two years, the other for five years. This body of labor senators and representatives should hold an annual Labor Congress one month in each year. The delegates from the Congressional districts would reflect the wishes of their constituents; *i. e.*, the various trades of their districts. The Senate chosen by these representatives, but elected for a longer term, would, by its greater experience, control the more extreme radicals coming annually fresh from the people. There might also be a small body of experienced men, chosen by the senators—these men forming an advisory body, similar to the United States Supreme Court, their number being limited to seven judges. This board should decide all labor questions, the trades to submit to their decisions. This organized labor congress would not be expensive. It could direct and act promptly on all questions, nominating or indorsing proper persons for all offices, local, State, and national. It would receive proper respect from all parties. Fair and equal justice would be meted out to labor distributed and to labor condensed.

For legislation, I believe in limited political socialism: that oceans, rivers, canals, railways, postal and telegraph systems should be owned by the National Government, for the use of all,

at as low a toll as will provide for their proper maintenance ; that is, for the use of labor in both its forms, industry and capital.

Rights of private property should be respected. A man's earnings, whether by ability, luck or wit, should be his entirely and without restraint during his life. There should be no income-tax, which only offers a premium on fraud, and oppresses the energy of both labor and capital. A legacy-tax should be laid, to the extent of say ten per cent., on all fortunes in excess of \$200,000. This legacy-tax would not oppress the heir receiving so much property, and should not be regretted by the dead, who was indebted to the protection of the government which enabled him to accumulate his wealth. This legacy-tax, leading to distribution through division of estates, could be fairly collected. It would give handsome returns to the State, and cause a considerable reduction of taxes. It would render the perpetuation of immense fortunes in a few families impossible, and would thus obviate that grave impending danger, the concentration of wealth in single families, which wrecked the Roman Empire.

I trust that these few words will be of some service to my brother-workers, Labor and Capital. I wish to see them work hand in hand for that great end, the improvement and enlightenment of the industrious humanity now closing our nineteenth century.

PIERRE LORILLARD.